



The Lord's Supper, or Love Feast

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The Lord's Supper was a separate institution from the bread and the wine of Holy Communion and yet was celebrated in connection with it. In the primitive church, the Lord's Supper (the *agape*) was the first celebrated, being followed by the breaking of bread and drinking of the wine of the Holy Communion (Eucharist). All three of these ordinances (the Washing of the Saints' Feet, the Lord's Supper, and the Eucharist) were instituted in the same place and at the same time—when "his hour was come." It was "during supper" (John 13:12 ASV) that Jesus arose and washed the disciples' feet. It was "as they were eating" supper (Matt. 26:26) that Jesus took bread and blessed and brake it and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take eat; this is my body." It was "after supper" that He took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new testament in my blood" (Luke 22:20).

John tells us this supper Christ ate with His disciples was before the (Jewish) Passover (John 13:1) and that it was 24 hours before. As He sat down with His disciples that last night He said unto them, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover (the Jewish Passover) with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not anymore eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God" (Luke 22:15-16). Notice, "I will not anymore eat." That should settle all doubts. What He did eat was the Christian Passover or Love Feast designated in the New Testament (John 13:7; I Cor. 5:7-8). Since the Scriptures record no other occasion where a supper was eaten previously like this supper, and nowhere is it recorded that the apostles instituted any ordinances, it is only sane to conclude that the Lord authorized

this meal and the apostles carried it on (I Cor. 11:17-34; II Pet. 2:13; Jude 12).

These terms, "the Lord's Supper," and "Love Feast" used in the New Testament designate the meal which the Lord ate with His disciples in the upper room and have these sym-



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bolical meanings. The Love Feast certainly symbolizes the oneness of the children of God, sitting together in love as God's great family. Not as the Corinthian church, where Paul is correcting the abuse, saying it was impossible to eat the Lord's Supper with these "divisions" among the people (I Cor. 11:18). Such a love feast was a mockery and a lie. Later in the evening Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another" (John 13:34-35). Jesus alone knew the lasting benefits of His children sitting at such a Christian love feast. The term "Lord's Supper" symbolizes more fully the "future ministry" of Christ. While there are many symbols set forth here of special value through this meal, the outstanding one is the marriage feast of the

Lamb with the bride in heaven (Rev. 19:7-9; Eph. 5:25-33). Toward this blessed hope this feast points and warms the hearts of the saints. Christ at this supper is the central figure and will be through the ages. He promises "that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3); "that they may behold my glory" (John 17:24); "and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thess. 4:17).

Christ, the perfect Servant, will continue to serve the saints through all eternity, as symbolized by this meal. "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (Rev. 7:17); and "he shall gird himself . . . and will come forth and serve them" (Luke 12:37). "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14).

WHY CHRISTIANS SUFFER

I bear my willing witness that I owe more to the fire, and the hammer, and the file, than to anything in my Lord's workshop. I sometimes question whether I have ever learned anything except through the rod. When my schoolroom is darkened, I see most.—C. H. Spurgeon.

PARENTAL EXAMPLE

Johnny was watching the traffic from the window. "Oh, Mother, a truck went by as big as a house!"

"Johnnie, why do you exaggerate so terribly? I've told you 40 million times about that habit of yours, and it doesn't do a bit of good!"—O. I. Baptist.